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CONSTITUENCY INFLUENCE ON CONGRESSIONAL

DECISION-MAKING: A META-ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

Like many areas of study within Political Science, the influence of constituency on congressional voting is often assumed, but not often demonstrated empirically. Some studies claim constituency has a strong impact; others claim is it nonexistent. In an attempt to find an overall pattern in the literature, I examine numerous studies of congressional decision-making. Specifically I conduct a meta-analysis of 31 studies of constituency influence on congressional voting. I introduce theoretical arguments concerning the impact of constituency, ideology, and party identification on the voting decisions made by members of Congress. I introduce the concept of meta-analysis and describe the specific steps taken in conducting this analysis of congressional voting. The results indicate that constituency influence is a significant predictor of congressional voting, but that ideology and party identification demonstrate a stronger effect than constituency.

CONSTITUENCY INFLUENCE ON CONGRESSIONAL DECISION-MAKING: A META-ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

The usual framework for analyzing roll call voting is through the variables of party, constituency, and ideology (Caldeira and Wright 1998, 506).

If we view science as the accumulation and refinement of information and knowledge, it then becomes critical to establish guidelines for reliable and valid reviews, integrations, and syntheses of studies examining similar research questions (Wolf 1986, 10).

A large number of the empirical studies that have examined congressional decision-making have used common variables, if not measurements. In a majority of studies, all or some of the "big three" variables – ideology, constituency influence, party – are used to explain all or some of the ways members of Congress vote on issues. In a typical research design, these variables are operationalized, measured, and analyzed as to their effect on congressional behavior. The dependent variable is typically measured as a vote or a series of votes on a specific issue, or a scale comprised of individual voting in a particular area of policy or interest. Depending on the internal and external validity, a researcher concludes from the analysis that, for example, constituency influence was great under one set of circumstances, but a weak indicator under another. Studies deemed to be significant are then added to the evidence used to support one or more theories, and perhaps become part of a literature review. Research progresses in such ways.

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But even a brief review of the literature on congressional voting will show that different studies often approach similar questions in different ways with different methods. For instance, researchers approach the questions of constituency influence through public opinion (Miller and Stokes 1963; Bernstein 1989), interviews with legislators (Fenno 1978; Kingdon 1981), and district economic and demographic characteristics, to name but a few. How, then, can we best take stock of the overall research into congressional decision-making? In other words, with so many studies, and so many different measurements of different variables, can we determine an overall pattern in congressional voting studies?

I propose that *meta-analysis* will give us a good view of the "bigger" picture. A statistical tool often employed in the medical field, and gaining stronger acceptance in many social sciences (see Lau, et al (1999) for a recent political science application), meta-analysis "provides for the statistical integration of empirical studies of a common phenomenon" (Glass, McGaw, and Smith, 1981, 93). In short, it is a recognized method for conducting a quantitative literature review. I use meta-analysis as a means for defining the "universe" of studies to be reviewed, determining a measure of "effect" for the variables of interest for each study, and combining these common metrics, in order to determine the overall impact of the variables.

I begin this thesis by discussing the theoretical arguments surrounding congressional voting. I concentrate on the influence of constituency, but also address party identification, and ideology. Following this, I introduce the concept of meta-analysis and defend its use in studying congressional decision-making. I address several arguments for and against using the technique, and specify how I intend to proceed

through each step of conducting a meta-analysis. I then present and summarize the

results of this systematic quantitative review of the field of research surrounding

congressional voting.

THEORIES AND MODELS OF CONGRESSIONAL VOTING

Introduction

Why, as Caldeira and Wright (1998) correctly point out, is the study of congressional voting usually analyzed through the variables of party, ideology, and constituency? What about these variables helps to explain congressional behavior? In this thesis I do not present an original theory or model of legislative decision making. I am not looking to establish a new causal explanation or a useful, predictive approximation of the real world. I am simply synthesizing research to identify patterns of influence. I will draw upon the works of others to explain the causal relationships between these variables and voting in Congress. Before testing for the overall impact of these variables, we need to understand the rationale behind their usage. I attempt just that in the following sections. The purpose here is to describe the general theoretical framework(s) surrounding the key variables I expect to impact roll call voting in the numerous studies I will later analyze.

Constituency Influence

The idea that members of Congress base their voting decisions on the interests of their constituencies is hardly new. During the Constitutional Convention of 1787, delegates wrestled with the question of how much influence to encourage or allow. They debated the very definition of constituency, with many arguing for keeping the vote in the hands of property holders only, thus protecting the government from the whims of the

masses. Second, a key provision in the First Amendment allowed for the public to petition the government; a direct form of constituency influence which played an important role in the slavery controversy leading up to the Civil War. With regard to more contemporary considerations, the general explanation has proven to be an illusive certainty, for although scholars and politicians alike claim constituency interest *does* affect voting decisions, empirical results have been rather mixed.

Most studies of constituency influence begin by acknowledging Turner's (1951) and MacRae's (1957) contributions, both of which use voting scales, such as Turner's "party loyalty score," as dependent variables and various demographic or electoral characteristics as independent variables. Their findings indicate that members consider the interests of their constituents more strongly if they represent a marginal district. Intuitively, one would expect representatives holding more tenuously to their positions to be more concerned with the wishes of those upon whom they depend for continued employment. Indeed, Fiorina (1989) argues that the "disappearance of the marginals" resulted when Democrats, elected in 1964 from traditionally Republican districts, gained job security by focusing on their constituent's specific interests, particularly through casework and distributive policies. Others have echoed this "ombudsmen and pork barrelers" sentiment concerning increased attention to the district by members of both the House (Mayhew 1974) and the Senate (Parker 1985).

Miller and Stokes (1963) examine constituency influence by combining extensive NES survey data on incumbent congressmen, election opponents, and constituents with roll call data and district demographic characteristic. By comparing the attitudes of representatives and their constituents to voting in three policy areas (civil rights, welfare,

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and foreign policy), the authors come to a somewhat unexpected conclusion: members are influenced by their perceptions of the preferences held by their constituents; however, the influence seems strongest in the safest districts, not the marginal ones. Previous arguments supposed that members with the safest seats would be more able to ignore their constituencies, and be most likely to vote their own preferences. Miller and Stokes find the opposite, and Fiorina (1974, 1989) and others (Fenno, 1978) have suggested that perhaps the strength of a member's seat is gained precisely *because* he or she votes the wishes of the district. The representative who has retained a seat for a long time has most likely done so because he or she early on determined the "proper" (i.e., the constituency-pleasing) way to vote. Fenno argues that representatives spend the first part of their careers "expanding" their primary and reelection constituencies, in order to get to a comfortable position, and spend the second part "protecting" it to ensure the continuation of support from home.

Fenno's *Home Style* (1978) findings are particularly important with regard to the definition of constituency. Rather than simply a demographic phenomenon, Fenno describes four overlapping constituencies: geographic (everyone in the district); reelection; primary; and personal (member's closest supporters). As Bullock and Brady (1983) point out, any measure of constituency based solely on demographic characteristics (the geographic constituency) will tend to blur the differences between a member's supporters and opponents. Again, Fiorina (1974) and others (especially Huntington 1950) have suggested that the "safest" districts are likely to be homogenous, with a dominant economic, and thus constituent, interest. Interestingly, Huntington (1950) argues that, in such districts, the opposition finds itself shut out of the game

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because there is nothing to oppose: "…both parties in that area reflect that [economic] interest…the second major party loses its most important characteristic, its monopoly of opposition" (676). In such a case, a member's reelection constituency makes up a significant majority of his geographical constituency; by voting his constituency's interests, the member should guarantee himself a "safe" district. Several of the studies included in the meta-analysis specifically address the impact of the more specific constituencies within the geographic district (Bailey and Brady, 1998; Overby and Henschen, 1994; Overby, 1991).

Many point to the *potential* power of constituents in explaining congressional voting. Fiorina (1974) argues that representatives see constituencies in terms of groups, and each group has distinct policy preferences, which they may or may not think about regularly. The representative's goal is to ensure that individual groups do not have a reason to think about "their" policy, especially if the reason is provided by the member's electoral opponent:

> What counts is the potential damage of a vote. Even if only one in a hundred realize that potential, that may be the vote that ends a political life. Granted, the overwhelming bulk of Congressmen are reelected. But, by the same token, never does a Congressional election pass without leaving one or more Representatives an/or Senators consigned to political oblivion…Choosing discretion over valor, the representative votes as if the probability of his action becoming a campaign issue is unity (123).

Kingdon (1989) also cites the importance of potential damage, and frames his argument in terms of the "intensity" of an issue. By taking into account his or her own intensity over an issue as well as the intensity of the constituency, the member of Congress determines the best course of action to ensure the constituency is not incited. Kingdon argues that a member will especially support issues of high *constituency* intensity if the

member's intensity is low; thus the tendency for high-impact local industries to be protected, even if the member's own convictions lead in another direction. Kingdon also stresses the member's fear of a "string of votes" that an opponent could use in an election-year challenge. Importantly, it is the members themselves, in their own words, who most often invoke the importance of "potential consequences" as an explanation for members' positions (Fenno 1978; Kingdon 1989).

Arnold (1990) begins his search for the logic of congressional decision-making in a similar vein: with the assumption that a member's first concern with regard to any decision is the impact the action will have on reelection. Arnold argues that members decide issues based first on "the alternative that contributes more to their election margin" (60). The greatest fear of the individual legislator, he continues, following Fiorina and Kingdon, is not the occasional incorrect vote, but rather the challenger who is able to exploit the "wrong choices" the member has made during his term (272). Arnold, however, goes beyond reelection in explaining constituency influence. After reelection, a member's hierarchy of goals includes such activities as serving one's core constituency and making good public policy. For a member of Congress, especially a representative from a homogenous district, serving the core constituency may well mean serving a majority of the electorate. Serving this group will necessarily play into the member's reelection strategy, but the immediate goal is much different. Arnold argues that certain behavior, such as forming a coalition within Congress, may reflect more than a desire for reelection; it may reflect a strong interest in good policy. However, his preemptive caveat is clear: "legislators do not champion causes that might hinder their reelection chances (8, footnote 7.) Voting decisions are made only after considering the

traceability and salience, or magnitude, of the consequences. This argument connects the normative tradition of reelection as the member's primary motive with positive theories that claim constituency interests will come into play most on issues of narrow definition and highly visible effect.[1]

Economic interpretations of the relationship between representatives and their constituents have often argued that there should be relatively little district-level influence on the member of Congress. Downs (1957) argues that parties and politicians seek power by advocating policies that appeal to the median voter. At the same time, the voter has little incentive to become well acquainted with the issues or their representatives; instead, voters concede these demands on their time to those who can better afford it. Influence from the general public thus comes in the form of lobbying on the part of specific groups that are able to afford the costs of becoming experts in their particular area and influence policy in directions beneficial to their specific interests (Schattschneider 1970). It is only rational, therefore, for the congressman to pay attention to those willing and able to pay the costs of lobbying, and only rational for the public to let him do so.

However, if the voter-principals are able to recruit an agent who shares their beliefs, desires, and goals, then constituency influence likely falls in line with ideology and party in leading to the same outcome. Several authors have investigated the relationship between constituency influence and ideology with regard to the representative's ability to "shirk" by voting against the wishes of her constituents. We explore these studies in more detail below.

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[1] For instance: Weingast (1979), Weingast, Shepsle, and Johnsen (1981), Nelson and Silberberg (1987)

Constituency Influence and Ideology

Studies of mass politics have returned mixed results with regard to the American public's understanding and usage of ideology. Certainly the early reports (Campbell, et al 1960; Converse 1964) did not present a flattering image of the voter's ability to comprehend politics along an ideological continuum. Notwithstanding evidence to the contrary, there are persuasive arguments that the public prefers short cuts, like schemas and cues (see Sniderman, Brody, and Tetlock 1991), to ideological frameworks for understanding politics. However, the news media, candidates for office, and members of Congress themselves, use ideological imagery in a matter-of-fact way. Hence, a Congressman referring to the "liberal, left-wing Democrat's plan" or the "far-right's ultra-conservative agenda" expects to be readily understood by the majority of observers. Even if the mass public is unlikely to find ideological thinking useful, elites are far better able to make use of ideological terms. Indeed, there is considerable evidence of ideological behavior and attitudes among political elites. The question, in this analysis, then, is what does ideology mean for legislators and how does it affect their voting decisions?

Standard definition of ideology has focused on the ordering of the "ideal" world or government. Clausen (1973) refers to it as "logically interrelated sets of beliefs about the political order that derive from a limited number of values and premises about the characteristics of human beings" (100). He further describes the familiar roles and tendencies of the conservative and liberal sides of the ideological spectrum (117). Kalt and Zupan (1984) describe political ideologies as "more or less consistent sets of normative statements as to best or preferred states of the world...how government can

best serve their proponents' conceptions of the public interest" (281). Downs succinctly terms it "a verbal image of the good society and of the chief means of constructing such a society" (1957, 96).

While generally accepting the broad definition of the term, scholars have debated strongly over the effect (if any) of ideology on congressional decision-making. On the one hand, the idea of a public-spirited representative basing decisions on his or her view of a "good and just" society may be attractive to some. And certainly on non-economic issues, it is entirely reasonable to expect a representative to take into account his or her "conception of the public interest" or "image of a good society" when making decisions. Nonetheless, members renege on their promises, or "shirk", when they make voting decisions that are not in keeping with the wishes of their districts (Parker, 1996).

Clausen (1973) looked for evidence of ideology in congressional voting on five policy dimensions – social welfare, agricultural assistance, government management, civil liberties, and international involvement. He found evidence that a significant portion of the membership of Congress was influenced by views on the role of government; this influence was reliable enough to place these members within either the liberal or conservative camp. In a similar vein, Kingdon (1989) regarded a member's own specific policy attitude as one of the seven "forces" that affect voting decisions, and he found in his interviews with House members a "kind of dimensional thinking": individuals arrayed policy alternatives along an ideological continuum, usually supporting the option deemed to represent most closely their own opinions and views.

Economists, however, have traditionally looked with suspicion on any explanation for behavior not built around self-interest; they view such behavior as "slack

in the principle-agent relationship" or, at best, an insignificant "consumption good" (Kalt and Zupan, 1984, 280). Downs (1957), specifically addressing political parties, argues that ideology is simply a means to power; parties advocate policy positions in order to gain office, not the other way around. It follows that if there is no gain or profit from ideological stands, then indicators of such behavior should prove insignificant in explaining congressional voting. Kau and Rubin (1979), however, claim that the effect of ideology, when separated from the more accepted roles of economic interests and logrolling, is significant in explaining voting. Kalt and Zupan (1984) agree, suggesting that ideology represents a breakdown in the ability of the principal to monitor and control the agent; they show that such "shirking", based on the agent's "rational altruistic-ideological promotion of self-defined notions of the public interest" (298), can affect a member's decision-making. Peltzman (1984) takes issue with these findings and convincingly argues that measurements of ideology tend to obscure significant economic effects: when constituency interests are properly operationalized and measured, most ideological voting disappears. Ideological reputations, like party labels, may also serve constituents by providing cheap information about representatives or candidates, especially for non-economic issues, where the costs are generally lower. For instance, Nelson and Silberg (1987) argue that ideology can be a significant part of a congressman's decision-making process, but more on specific, narrowly defined issues than on broader bills.

Several studies have claimed that ideology not only affects congressional decision-making, but may actually enhance the principal-agent relationship. Lott (1989) suggests that ideological politicians obtain utility through "doing the right thing." When

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their positions correspond to those of their constituents, they will not shirk (vote against their constituent's interests) because they would thus forego utility consumption. Rohde (1991) cautions that members of Congress enter office with a myriad of personal goals; but agrees that members gain a strong electoral advantage when their policy interests coincide with those of their constituencies, as he claims happened with the influx of liberal northern Democrats to the House in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Dougan and Munger (1989) build on the idea of ideology serving as "brand name capital" and argue that an ideological reputation provides a cheap way for both the agent to satisfy his like-minded constituents, and the principals to monitor their representative. Davis and Porter (1989) support this point by arguing that ideological voting is a consumption good: "In the decision whether to consume or invest a voting opportunity, the political agent weighs the present gratification of consumption against the enhanced prospects of future consumption afforded by investment" (103). They find that ideology increases its explanatory power after a politician has reached a certain "threshold" of age, after which he "gets more" out of consuming than he risks by foregoing investment. Similarly, Bender (1991) includes ideological voting as part of the value of holding office. He supplements the familiar economic argument that members vote so as to maximize their returns from office by suggesting that the vote itself provides utility. It either strengthens the possibility for reelection or gives ideological satisfaction, or both. The member must balance these components of his expected return.

Constituency Influence and Party

At face value, party identification seems to have a straightforward influence on congressional decision-making. Other than the two current Independent congressmen,

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members of Congress register their roll call votes as members of one of two political parties.[2] A member's party designation follows only his or her name as the initial information relayed to the general public in any report and most written information about his or her Washington activity. A constituency designation follows, but it is generalized by reference to an entire state (though even if members were labeled by their specific districts, it would mean little to non-residents). Thus, even acknowledging the infamous lack of attention the average citizen pays to American government, one knows at first glance that Moakley (D-MA) and Wilson (R-NM) are each members of political parties that lean generally in predictable directions along most policy dimensions.

But how does party membership influence voting? Clausen (1973) compares the influence of party across five dimensions of congressional voting – civil liberties, international involvement, agricultural assistance, social welfare, and government management – and finds that party predicts well on the last three dimensions. However, as he points out, predicting well and demonstrating causation are two different things (91). Because this analysis of voting studies will not help determine causation, I need to first examine the theoretical arguments for party membership as an influence on congressional voting. Later I assess whether there is an overall pattern of a relationship between the two variables. Our aim here is to lay a theoretical foundation explaining why party membership would impact a congressman's vote.

The efforts of congressional scholars in this area seem to point to three general incentives for members to hold the party line. The first is the active role of the party leadership, the second is the member's own reelection and professional incentives, and the third is the potential sanctioning by constituents.

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[2] Sanders (I-VT) and Goode (I-VA)

The majority party is a force in Congress so long as its members vote together. Party membership thus works continually to ensure that party is a major influence of congressional voting. In doing so, the leadership calls upon several potential sanctions to keep members in line. First of all, the leadership has significant (though not absolute) influence over committee assignments. Members seeking a coveted position on a House committee for visibility or distributive purposes need to demonstrate party loyalty. Additionally, the leadership exerts its most direct influence on the floor of the chamber. For instance, the House leadership controls legislation from initial committee referral to final voting, meaning that members who demonstrate loyalty to the party can accrue special benefits such as early and more certain passage of legislation (Crane, Leavens, Tollison 1986). Despite the strength of these arguments, many researchers (Wilson 1885; Kindgon 1989; Hurley 1989) have argued that the internal influence of party leadership is not a good explanation of congressional voting.

In addition to the leadership's influence, members' own incentives and goals should theoretically lead them to adhere to party positions. Cox and McCubbins (1994), for example, argue that members (they investigate House Democrats) "post a bond," through membership in the party caucus, that pledges their commitment to the party in return for certain benefits. These benefits include the familiar electoral advantages as well as "intralegislative assets" (things that increase the benefit of one's seat). Electorally, cooperation with the caucus is the best guarantee of securing the party's nomination for reelection. A candidate without party support is viewed as a poor investment for voters and stands little chance of being returned to office. With regard to intralegislative assets, I have already discussed the importance of members securing

valuable committee positions. Additionally, Cox and McCubbins argue that members expect certain "uncollected IOUs" in return for loyal support of the party (105). Whether it is access to influence accrued as a senior member, or the desire for special deals that deliver continued streams of benefits, the individual legislator must demonstrate a commitment to the party in order to realize the maturity of the bond. Another asset is the benefits derived from membership in the majority party. For instance, Fiorina and Noll (1979) contend that incumbents gain by providing benefits through public goods, pork, and casework. A member of the majority, it follows, would not want to jeopardize the many benefits that come from the control that the majority party exercises over the distribution of federal expenditures and the design of government programs.

An additional reason a member of Congress would be influenced to vote according to party identification is signaling, or cue taking. Party labels, and votes that correspond to those labels, are cheap sources of information about past and future behavior (Peltzman 1984). Perhaps members cut their own information costs by taking "cues" from like-minded members (Matthews and Stimson 1970). With thousands of votes on a multitude of issues, there is great incentive for individual congressmen to use shortcuts to arrive at some policy decisions. Kingdon (1989) supports this position, and ranks *fellow congressmen* as important as *constituents* in terms of influence over voting decisions. He further argues that members, having been recruited from specific types of districts (grouped by party), tend to take their cues on policy from similarly predisposed colleagues. And Hurley (1989) argues that freshman members of the House especially stand to gain from cue-taking, since they are more likely to vote with the party as a way of supplementing their relatively low policy expertise.

In addition to party leadership and a member's own electoral and intralegislative incentives, scholars have pointed to the relationship of constituency *with* party in determining legislator's votes. Kingdon (1989) argues first of all that party is a weak influence on congressional voting and specifically claims that party differences are a function of differences in constituencies. In other words, certain interests and coalitions support each party. Members of Congress tend to support these interests and coalitions as represented in their districts. Thus, a member's votes are as likely to be a reflection of those specific interests as they are his party membership. So when Kingdon finds that Northern Democrats are from urban areas while Southern Democrats and Republicans are more likely to represent rural areas or small towns, he claims that this is a function first of the predominant interests in those districts, not the particular effects of party identification. Bullock and Brady's (1983) study of senators from the same states indicates that party voting also depends largely on the salience of other factors. They found that party has a stronger effect on roll call voting than does the senator's various constituencies, and that the relationship is particularly true where each senator gains his or her support from different reelection constituencies within the common geographic constituency.

Clausen (1973) predicts a fortune for the person who is able to "exact a toll of twenty-five cents for every time a political scientist repeats that tiresome truism: Party is the best single predictor of voting in the United States Congress" (91). Mixed empirical results have perhaps reduced the recent potential for significant income from such a proposition. However, party identification is included in almost every study of

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congressional voting. Therefore, it lends itself very well to our objective of evaluating

the effects of this and our other variables.

MEASUREMENT AND THE CURRENT STATE OF KNOWLEDGE

Introduction

The field of research surrounding congressional decision-making has no shortage of rich, innovative theories and explanatory frameworks. The attempt to connect various models to reality, however, has frequently been hindered by the inability of some variables to accurately capture the relationship between Congress and the public. In this section I examine arguments concerning the operationalization and measurement of the variables, specifically constituency influence. In doing so, I also address the current state of knowledge regarding the effects of constituency, ideology, and party on congressional voting.

Measuring Constituency Influence.

Certainly all members of Congress decide many issues and voting positions based in part on the wishes of their constituents. In determining *how much* impact the constituency has, researchers have struggled to accurately measure constituency opinion. Essentially, congressional scholars face the same problem congressional members face: lack of information. Faced with an electorate that has little time or concern for political issues, Fiorina (1974), states that "representatives apparently make their voting decisions in an atmosphere of great uncertainty about the political impact of those decisions" (29). Similarly, researchers have to deal with a lack of reliable information concerning true constituent influence on congressional issues. Opinion research offers probably the most

direct method of determining the issue preferences of constituency members, and has been employed in several studies (Miller and Stokes 1963; Jackson 1974; West 1987; Shapiro, et al 1990; Bartels 1991). However, resource limitations and methodological concerns have led many scholars to substitute economic and demographic measurements for direct opinion as a measurement of constituency influence.[3]

Researchers have enjoyed varying levels of success in predicting congressional voting via economic and demographic measurements, and in a significant percent of such studies, constituency opinion is operationalized in this way. Certainly the reasoning behind this technique is strong. If researchers cannot determine the specific opinions held by residents of a particular district, they perhaps can infer such opinions from the types of groups, industries, and economic characteristics that make up the district. This also makes sense from the perspective of the congressman who considers his decision alternatives not in terms of an entire geographic constituency, but certainly in terms of those for whom the decision might present an opportunity to renew their impression of their representative.

Thus one finds research that attempts to explain voting on trade issues as a response to the portion of the constituency employed in certain export-sensitive industries or the percentage of union membership in the district (Bailey and Brady 1998; Holian, Krebs, and Walsh 1997; Marks 1993). Other scholars assume that congressional voting on defense issues is impacted by the current amount of Department of Defense spending

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[3] Miller and Stokes (1963) study is a typical starting point for reviews of congressional decision-making; however, it is often criticized for its external validity. The authors used SRC data on 1,517 respondents in 116 congressional districts. Counting only useable opinions, the authors were left with an average of 11 respondents per constituency from which to determine "district" opinion (Erikson 1978).

in the state or the amount of residents employed by defense contractors (Bartels 1991; Fleisher 1985; Lindsay 1990, 1991).

Interestingly, the defense example highlights a common non-economic method for measuring constituency opinion. Several studies seek to capture the overall ideology of the *constituency* by examining district-level voting for ideologically distinct presidential candidates. For instance, Bartels (1991) argues that a member of Congress, in deciding which way to vote on defense spending in 1982, will take into account, among other things, the amount of support the district gave to Ronald Reagan's decidedly pro-defense 1980 presidential bid. Likewise, Holian, Krebs, and Walsh (1997) include district-level voting for Bill Clinton and Ross Perot in 1992 as indicators for constituency opinion towards the North American Free Trade Agreement, on which the candidates held visible and distinct views.

Demographic characteristics are viable proxies for district-level opinion in certain situations where it is clear that particular groups have fairly constant voting tendencies. Thus, studies of Senate voting on the Supreme Court nomination of Clarence Thomas take into consideration both the level of African Americans as well as women in the constituency, with one study specifically measuring the percentage of each group that voted for the Senator – his or her reelection constituency (Overby and Brown 1997). Kau and Rubin (1993) investigate congressional voting on several issues and include various applicable demographic variables in each case. An amendment to prohibit federal employee health insurance policies from financing abortions is explained in terms of variables such as education, minority populations, and poverty levels. A different vote –

against funding for the MX missile – is tested against age, white-collar populations, and defense spending in the district (Kau and Rubin 1993 160-165).

Measuring Ideology and Party Identification

I am primarily interested in the effect of constituencies on congressional voting. As I have stated, however, many have argued for the impact of a member's ideological beliefs or party identification as a better predictor of voting decisions. Again, studies have presented comprehensive theories to account for the explanatory power of these variables. Unlike the measurement of constituency influence, however, scholars are able to employ widely, if not universally, accepted measurements of both ideology and party identification.

With regard to party identification, every study I investigated simply assigned a dummy variable (1 and 2, or 1 and 0) to Democratic or Republican membership for inclusion in the statistical model. Ideological measurement is not quite as straightforward, however. The majority of studies that I investigated measured congressional members' ideology through one of many available interest group voting scales. There are advantages and disadvantages to using such scores. First, they are widely used, providing some aspect of consistency across research. Numerous studies may differ in their operationalization and measurement of constituency influence; but a sample of studies that include a measure of ideology will likely capture the effect via a common scale such as that determined by Americans for Democratic Action (ADA).[4] Additionally, particular interest groups develop scores based on votes taken within their specific policy arena. Thus, many researchers employ the ratings as a straightforward and

convenient measure of a legislator's voting behavior over a series of votes on a particular issue or policy (Lindsay 1990; West 1987; Caldeira and Wright 1998).

Because ideology is a widely recognized element of voting behavior, scholars want to include some type of ideological indicator in models of congressional decisions. However, most studies that use an interest group measurement of ideology include a disclaimer recognizing the potential confounding effect of voting scales on party and constituency measurements. Numerous scholars (Kau and Rubin 1979; Carson and Oppenheimer 1984; Peltzman 1984) point out that interest group ratings, as compilations of a member's previous voting record, necessarily include all the other factors besides ideology which go into a voting decision. Thus, using an interest group rating alongside measures of partisanship and constituency influence may tend to overstate the relationship between ideology and voting and underestimate the impact of the other variables (Jackson and Kingdon 1992). Some scholars deal with this weakness simply by acknowledging the implications of using voting scores, while others attempt to "isolate that part of ideology exclusive of constituents' interests" (Hird 1993).

What the Measurements Tell Us

As imperfect as the measurements of the various influences of congressional decision-making might be, they have proven invaluable in expanding our understanding of the dynamics of voting in Congress. Recent scholarship strengthens several ideas discussed earlier. Fiorina (1974), Kingdon (1989) and Arnold (1990) argued for the importance of the potential impact of a congressman's decisions. Lindsay's (1990, 1991) study of congressional voting on strategic weapons indicates that legislators will pursue

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[4] 17 studies in my sample include a measure of ideology as an independent variable. Of the 17, 10 use ADA scores. Two defense studies use National Security Index measures, and the other five studies use five

"good policy" as long as that pursuit does not compromise their ultimate reelection goal. A member may make decisions based on personal considerations, Lindsay argues, but only after careful consideration of the costs.

Several recent studies find that issue salience is one condition (perhaps the only one) under which constituency influence impacts the member's voting decision. Clark's (1996) study of "unpopular votes" (congressional pay raises) indicates that, similar to Nelson and Silberberg (1987), when the issue was clearly visible and understood by the constituency, legislators bowed to public opinion; on more complex amendments members were free to vote as they chose. Bartels (1991) and Holian, Krebs, and Walsh (1997) also find strong evidence for the importance of issue salience. Bartels shows that public approval of presidential candidate Ronald Reagan's military platform (as evidenced by districts' 1980 vote for Reagan) strongly impacted congressional voting on 1982 defense spending proposals. Holian, Krebs, and Walsh demonstrate the influence that district-level opinion of the candidacy of Ross Perot and his well-known stance on the NAFTA had on representative's decisions to vote for or against the agreement.

A number of researchers have focused on what seems to be a particularly fertile area of concentration with regard to constituency influence: the reelection constituency. Fenno's (1978) concept of constituency of four concentric circles moves from the geographic – demographic characteristics of the district – to the personal – the member's closest supporters. Many studies of constituency impact concentrate on the geographic level of influence, and thus look for influence among a member's supporters and opponents alike. Several recent studies seek to investigate the next "circle", the reelection constituency, which represents those district residents who supported the

different interest group scales.

member in the last election and whom he thinks will support him again. Shapiro (Shapiro et al 1990) provides some evidence that Senators' voting patterns in economic and foreign policy issues are related to the positions of their constituents from the same party. Tosini and Tower (1987) show that House members and Senators demonstrated different voting patterns on the 1985 textile bill, with House members much more responsive to constituency indicators of their specific districts than Senators were to the more diffuse demands of their states.

Other studies reveal a more complicated pattern of results with regard to reelection constituencies. Bailey and Brady (1998) demonstrate that constituency influence on Senate voting on the GATT and NAFTA trade initiatives was greater in homogenous states, where the reelection constituency is clearly recognized. Senators from more heterogeneous states cast their votes based more on party identification and interest group ratings (ideology) than on constituency characteristics. Overby and Brown (1997) investigate reelection constituency impact on the confirmation vote for Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas. Instead of examining the percentage of African Americans in the district, the authors determine that the number of African Americans in the reelection constituency is what heavily impacted Senators' votes to confirm Thomas. In other words, the legislators were less concerned about members of a particular constituency group who had not voted for them last election, but quite responsive to the members of the same group who had provided previous electoral support.

Overby and Brown also find strong influence from a member's ideological rating and party identification. Others find more support for these variables than for constituency influence. Leogrande and Brenner (1993), Fleisher (1985) and McCormick

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(1985) argue that, on foreign policy and defense issues, ideology and party identification are more likely to influence voting decisions than is constituency influence.

Overall, the current state of research using the common variables of constituency influence, party identification, and ideology paints a picture of a legislator who votes based on several factors. The member of Congress would like the freedom to vote based on ideology; but the member will feel strong pressures to vote based on party membership. However, the member will likely make most voting decisions with an ear to the opinion of the residents back home. Where specific instructions are loud and clear, where the issue is salient, and where the groups that put the member in Congress are interested, the legislator will bow to the wishes of the constituents. Where issues are more complex, or of dubious impact on the constituency, the member will feel greater freedom to vote as his or her ideology or interest leads.

METHODS

Introduction

We now have strong reason to expect that the variables I am investigating do indeed influence congressional voting. Constituency interests cause legislators to consider the potential impact of their decisions in order to best position themselves for reelection. Ideology may influence a member to cast a particular vote based on his or her personal impressions of what is best for society, or perhaps as an attempt to send a signal or confirm a reputation. Party membership contains many benefits for the individual who remains loyal by voting the party line. Each variable has a convincing line of research to support its impact on voting; moreover, the three variables are often viewed as interrelated. I am now in a position to examine the overall impact of these variables as measured and tested in numerous studies over the past two decades. In the following section, I introduce the concept of meta-analysis and describe its use in studying congressional decision-making. I also address several arguments against using the technique, and specify how I intend to proceed through each step of a meta-analysis of congressional decision-making.

Why a Meta-analysis?

Traditional Literature Reviews

In order to test any new hypothesis, one must first build a case for proceeding, based on the existing body of research and accumulated evidence. Literature reviews

accomplish this goal relatively well. However, as Wolf (1986) states: "In a traditional review of literature, impressionistic judgments would be made based on the reviewer's reading and understanding of each of the studies. Some studies may be considered more worthy than others, and thus some may be relied on more or less heavily in drawing conclusions" (21).

Meta-analysis builds on traditional literature reviews in at least three ways: precision, objectivity, and replicability (Mullen and Miller, 1991). A meta-analysis is precise because, for each independent study examined, it uses the same criteria and methods to extract statistical results and convert the results to common metrics, which are then analyzed for overall direction and trends. Objectivity is realized because of the nature of the selection process. Rather than being at the whim of the reviewer, meta-analysis makes known the specific criteria for inclusion and applies that criteria to a defined universe of studies. Finally, because of this precision and objectivity, requirements through replication are clear and straightforward. Thus, a meta-analysis uses strict criteria for inclusion and precise techniques of statistical integration to analyze research findings from separate, independent studies. "...The findings themselves are treated as primary data, the goal being to establish the consistency and magnitude of the relationships in question" (Lau, et al 1999). My goal is to construct an empirically derived summary with which to answer questions about the role of constituency influence on congressional voting.

Generalization

The focus is on congressional decision-making. Normally the question of external validity would determine how the findings of one study might be generalized to

a larger set of results. Thus, a study addressing constituency influence on congressional voting might be limited in generalizability to Senate roll call votes on international trade during the mid-1990s (Bailey and Brady, 1998), or to overall congressional defense budget outlays for fiscal year 1982 (Bartels, 1991). Patterns discovered in a specific area of congressional activity are just that – patterns in a specific area. Conclusions must be handled carefully with regard to assuming general application. An attraction of meta-analysis is that the sample and measurements of particular studies do not limit us: "…if the phenomenon is conceptually broad and therefore should be demonstrated over a wide variety of contexts, then studies that vary extensively in subjects, situations, and procedures may be appropriate for inclusion" (Hall, et al. 1994, 19-20). Moreover, the heterogeneity of the findings may actually enhance confidence in the generalizability of the results. Again, consider the studies just mentioned. When we use meta-analysis, we are no longer focusing on the impact of constituencies on specific congressional votes. So, the effect of union membership and employment in non-tradable industries on international trade votes in the Senate (Bailey and Brady 1998), the effect of district public opinion and per capita Department of Defense spending on defense budget votes (Bartels 1991), or the effect of a strong African-American presence in a district on Senate confirmation voting on the Clarence Thomas nomination (Overby, et al. 1992), can all be combined to produce an overall indication of the effect of constituency on congressional voting.

This technique has been explored within political science, most recently in *The American Political Science Review* (Lau, et al. 1999). There the authors quantitatively review 52 studies and analyze 117 individual findings on the effect of negative political

advertising on voters. Their analysis indicated that negative political advertisements did not "turn off" or impact recipients any more than other types of political advertising, nor were they any more effective: "…a la Newton's third law, for every research finding there is an equal and opposite research finding" (859). Additionally, they found that negative advertising did not seem to undermine the American political process, contrary to much criticism of negative campaigns. Through their carefully constructed meta-analysis, the authors were not interested in refuting specific experiments or research, but rather in demonstrating an overall picture of research on negative political advertising. Thus the great attraction of meta-analysis: the ability to objectively and precisely sum up the empirical arguments covering a specific area of research.

Some Objections to Meta-analysis

Even as the use of meta-analysis has increased in many fields, several common criticisms have persisted regarding the technique. Since political science applications are even more recent, we have the benefit of 20 years of dialogue between opponents and supporters of meta-analysis. I present some of these arguments in the following pages.

Apples and Oranges

The most common objection is that the combination of studies examined may sometime yield very dissimilar operationalizations and measurements of variables. Thus, the critic deplores the attempt to "mix apples and oranges." Response to this criticisms has followed one of two paths. First, researchers can code characteristics for each study and test statistically whether these characteristics are related to the overall results (Wolf 1986). Lau, (Lau, et al. 1999) uses this technique, analyzing first the "raw" data, then testing the effects of the various studies' characteristics. As an example, in congressional

studies ideology is operationalized in some research by various interest group ratings and in other research by district-level election support for a visibly ideological candidate. As meta-analysts, we can code this, and test for the overall impact of ideology versus the impact measured by each method. A second way of responding to the "apples and oranges" objection is to contend that the criticism is misapplied. It may seem that meta-analysis involves aggregating the findings of different phenomena. If so, the criticism stands. However, if the various operationalizations of the variables are measuring the same phenomenon, it is appropriate to combine or aggregate them (Hall, et al. 1994). This is the familiar "combining apples and oranges is a good way to study fruit" retort. Beyond the cliché, however lies a compelling argument. In seeking to understand a broad concept, such as influences on congressional voting, it is not inappropriate to aggregate findings involving different operations of the independent and dependent variables.

Published versus unpublished

Any attempt to meaningfully synthesize literature must deal with the potential bias resulting form the use of published versus unpublished research. This is a key decision in the literature-search step, and I discuss the problem below in that context. Briefly, the debate centers around two arguments. Some argue that restricting the analysis to published studies helps maintain quality control due to the screening function of the review process. Essentially, published studies are the best studies, so use them. The alternate view holds that published studies are more likely to overrepresent statistically significant results due simply to the nature of the publishing process (Begg

1994). Scholars tend to publish, and editors tend to accept, studies demonstrating statistical results. I examine this argument further below.

Proposed Steps in Meta-Analysis

Various meta-analysts have proposed different specific steps to include in a meta-analysis. However, they all build their analyses around these common general steps: what to investigate (define hypothesis test); how to investigate (literature search and coding); what to measure (common metrics), and how to interpret the results.

Define the Hypothesis Test

Most traditional literature reviews provide the "what we already know" in developing a new approach to a problem. In conducting a meta-analysis, I must be sure that I am not simply trolling without any idea of what I am looking for. I may not be testing a specific hypothesis, but I need to establish the specific question I am trying to answer.

> "The use of statistical methodology in accomplishing a literature review must be driven by conceptualization and judgment...A review with a careful meta-analysis but weak or irrelevant conceptualization offers little for the advance or the consolidation of knowledge" (Mullen and Miller, 1991, 429).

Durlak and Lipsey (1991) distinguish between descriptive and hypothesis-driven approaches to meta-analysis. The majority of meta-analyses are descriptive or exploratory, aiming to summarize the findings "on the focal relationship of interest...and describing the general characteristics of the relevant population of studies" (296). Hypothesis- or issue-driven studies "represent a more probing approach to a research literature" by focusing on specific hypotheses, competing theories, and pertinent variables. In our *APSR* example, Lau (Lau, et al. 1999) ties his review carefully to the

two prominent hypotheses surrounding the issue. They want to know if negative political advertising "works" and if it has detrimental effects on participatory democracy.

In theoretical sections of my thesis, I introduce the major theories and variables surrounding the study of congressional decision-making. This is a particularly important task when one considers that our statistical analysis will look for correlational patterns. I am not proposing and testing a causal theory, only looking for overall relationships between the variables. I must, therefore, lay down a clear theoretical foundation to impose some element of coherence onto these relationships. Specifically then, in my meta-analysis of roll call voting, I present arguments demonstrating the effects of ideology, party identification, and constituency influence on congressional decision-making. In the section addressing committee voting, I will readdress these variables as they pertain to specific committee actions, as well as introduce the variable of interest group influence. Though I present no pioneering hypotheses, my analysis will be keenly focused on the arguments surrounding these variables. Decades of research into the relationship between these factors and congressional voting have left a wealth of outcomes and results, from which I intend to determine an overall pattern of influence.

Literature Search

One could make arguments for each step of a meta-analysis as being the "most important," but if one part of the study calls for a careful, measured (and explained) approach, it is this one. This step includes locating relevant studies, as well as determining the criteria for inclusion in the meta-analysis. An important first consideration is that, even within the realm of published research, it is unlikely that a researcher will be able to examine all the research conducted in a particular area. Yet, for

a reliable meta-analysis, we need to devise a universe to reflect all research (Cooper and Lindsay, 1998). It may be reasonable to assume that a broad search of the literature will produce a representative enough sample to permit an effective analysis. Nonetheless, other important questions must be considered.

How much is enough? Traditional literature reviews are built upon *precision* – the *percentage* of articles retrieved that are deemed relevant to the particular topic. In other words, a reviewer selects research carefully to support a particular argument. Research synthesis, however, builds upon *recall*, seeking to retrieve as many articles related to the research question as possible (White 1994). Criticism of meta-analysis in the area of literature searches does not argue for a particular number or percentage of studies. After all, Glass (Glass et al. 1981) points to several analyses with less than 10 subject studies, while a contemporary examination of gender and helping behaviors looked at 172 relevant studies (Eagly and Crowley 1984). Lau (Lau et al. 1999) states that the goal in locating published studies of negative political advertising is "to access every relevant study" (853). In addition, they tracked down and acquired numerous unpublished studies and conference papers. In the end they conducted their meta-analysis on 52 studies. Were those all the relevant studies? Was 52, 10, or 172 the right number to achieve some overall sense of direction or effect in those studies? As White (1994) puts it: "the point is not to track down every paper that is somehow related to the topic…*the point is to avoid missing a useful paper that lies outside one's regular purview*" (44, italics in original). The point is that, even in the most exhaustive search, some studies will be missed.

Published versus unpublished? As mentioned earlier, this is a key decision in any meta-analysis. Again, the crux of the debate is between using only published studies, which may be of higher quality but may also overrepresent statistically significant findings, or using all available studies. Begg (1994) states that publication bias causes the greatest methodological threat to validity in meta-analysis. The decision is between trying to avoid the bias or trying to live with it. Lau (Lau et al. 1999) tried to avoid it. We will try to live with it. This presents at least two viable options. First, when reporting results of a meta-analysis of only published research, we must be certain to qualify any generalizability along those lines. Secondly, we might conceivably employ statistical methods assigned to compensate for an assumed publication bias. Rosenthal (1979) argued that the "file-drawer method" provides a way to determine how many studies confirming the null hypothesis would be needed to reverse the overall rejection of the null hypothesis. In other words, if publication bias causes a Type I error (we reject the null hypothesis when the real world dictates we accept), how many studies indicating the opposite effect would we need to avoid that error? Other methods of increasing complexity also are available to correct for publication bias (see Begg 1994).

I prefer an alternative approach to accepting publication bias. With respect to the first point (i.e., any conclusions from meta-analysis must be carefully considered in light of possible publication bias), I code and test for possible bias within the confines of the study. In this study I analyze numerous articles, each arguing for the impact of one or more variables on congressional voting. I have already mentioned Caldeira and Wright's (1998) statement that party, constituency and ideology make up the normal framework for examining and explaining roll-call voting. Many of the studies consider all three of

the variables, but focus on only one. While the fact that these studies were published in reputable journals may demonstrate bias towards findings of statistical significance with regard to that primary variable, it is also possible that insignificant findings on the other variables are embedded within the studies. For example, Caldeira and Wright (1998) found that party identification to be significant, but constituency opinion and member ideology insignificant, in predicting Senate support for the Supreme Court nomination of Robert Bork. Though published in the *American Journal of Political Science* – supposedly more likely to publish significant findings – this study includes insignificant findings on two of our variables of interest.

Search techniques? As mentioned, since a complete investigation of every relevant study may not be possible, we must clearly describe our methods for obtaining as representative a sample as possible. I began with a full search of the Social Science Citation Index, looking for any and all articles containing *congressional decision-making, congressional voting, congressional committees, committee decision-making, committee voting, congressional committees,* and *voting decisions.* By following up on the most heavily cited articles, I expanded the sample to include over 200 articles. I added yet more by searching *JSTOR* for articles containing relevant terms in the text, abstract, or title of the journals contained therein. I found numerous studies contained in books that were referenced throughout the articles.

Criteria for Inclusion? This question is perhaps the most important in the literature search step. As discussed earlier, the certainty of leaving out some information in even the most thorough search necessitates a description of the rationale for excluding any research from the analysis.

First of all, I am interested in testing what influences congressional voting. Therefore, our obvious criterion is that the studies included must examine the relationship between our variables and the roll call and committee voting of members of Congress. So, the included studies must contain one or a combination of constituency, ideology, and/or party identification as independent variables. As dependent variables, each study must somehow capture congressional voting; below I discuss methods for dealing with various measures of such voting. These two criteria concerning the independent and dependent variables provide the parameters for the analysis. Thus, I will not include research on the specific impact of presidential influence, personal utility, or logrolling, although these have received significant attention elsewhere, and are in many cases related to the variables. Likewise, studies that investigate as dependent variables congressional activities other than voting are excluded.

Next, with regard to the number of studies, our simple criteria concerning the independent and dependent variables is a target for considering the type of studies to include, but not the number. We know we can't examine every study, but we need to nonetheless obtain a representative sample of the research conducted in this area. As I indicated earlier, a computer and citation search of key terms revealed over 200 possible studies. This is a potential universe of studies on which to conduct a meta-analysis. We can approach this group of studies in two ways.

First, we could simply analyze all the articles, and hope our sample is representative of the entire body of research. However, it is very likely we would miss studies. With such a large sample, however, we could be confident that the excluded studies would not prove so extraordinary as to alter our results. The second possibility

for choosing articles is to take this large "sample" as a universe, and randomly select a number of articles to analyze. If we were confident that the large sample – the known universe – was complete, we would be allowing for a more manageable analysis of a representative sample without sacrificing accuracy. Unfortunately, we know our "universe" is not complete. It is large, but certainly lacks pieces of relevant research. So we have two less-than-perfect, or second-best, alternatives. A large sample that is not complete but fairly representative of published research, or a more manageable random sample that could amplify the shortcomings of the larger "universe."

An alternative is to abandon hope of complete representation and proceed along a different path. Another common criticism of meta-analysis is that synthesizing research does not take into account the quality of individual studies. A possible solution to this criticism is to restrict our meta-analysis to research published in certain top journals in the discipline. Some may argue that this is no less arbitrary a criteria for determining quality than the oft-questioned standards of the journals themselves. Others would rightly cry "publication bias!" Indeed, not only do I include only published research, but I accept only those studies appearing in the top four or five publications on this topic – congressional voting. But, it would be hard to argue against this sorting-decision if we place a premium on examining the best research available on the topic. Therefore, addressing the criticism that meta-analysis considers poor and good research in the same light, I select only studies that have survived the rigor of the editorial process associated with journals noted for publishing the most relevant and the best research. In effect, I trade obvious publication bias for the opportunity to demand a certain level of journal rigor and relevance.

This inclusion rule has other advantages. I choose research not only from the journals of highest quality, but of widest dissemination. Thus, the studies I analyze are widely known and reflect the most accepted and employed theoretical and methodical approaches to the question of congressional decision-making. In addition, the journal articles represent the empirical heart of many subsequent well-known books by the authors.

Therefore, I propose to include in the meta-analysis studies of congressional voting that include independent variables representing constituency influence, ideology, and/or party identification, and a dependent variable measuring congressional roll-call or committee voting. The studies must appear since 1980 in the one of the following journals: *American Politics Quarterly, American Journal of Political Science, American Political Science Review, Journal of Politics, Legislative Studies Quarterly, or Public Choice*. Our sample is thus smaller, but reflects the best research available on the topic – congressional voting.

Establishing Common Metrics

Because the studies I am interested in all report findings via several different statistical tests, the next step in a meta-analysis is to convert these statistics to common metrics. The frequent approach to this step utilizes either significance levels or effect sizes.

Combining significance levels is a time-tested method for analyzing outcomes (see Wolf 1986, 18). A significance value represents the probability of finding a test statistic as unusual or extreme as that calculated given that the null hypothesis is true (Becker 1994). Thus, by combining significant values from numerous independent

studies, we can determine an overall indication of how likely our results would be if no relationship existed between our variables.

Tests of significance provide only information pertaining to the acceptance or rejection of the null hypothesis; they provide no measure of the strength of the relationship. More widely employed (Glass, et al. 1981; Rosenthal 1994) is the measure of effect size: "the size of the effect of an independent variable on a dependent variable, or, more generally, the size of the relationship between any two variables" (Rosenthal, 1991). Though related to significance level tests, the effect size test will tell us not only that a relationship exists, but also the magnitude of that relationship:

Meta-analyses usually establish effect size by determining either the standardized difference (d) between means of a control and experimental group or the product moment correlation (r). Since most meta-analyses specifically address experiments (particularly in the medical and behavioral sciences), they use d as the common metric of effect size. Lau (Lau et al. 1999) employed this metric in his analysis of 52 studies (mostly experiments with control groups) of negative political advertising. The studies I am interested in, however, examine the relationship between one or more independent variables and a dependent variable in a non-controlled environment. For my purposes, computing r for those relationships will provide an effective standard measure of association, allowing an identification of patterns in the data across studies.

Again, we must keep in mind the reason for using a common metric: "to convert various summary statistics into a simple common metric or effect size in order to aggregate or synthesize them" (Wolf 1986). My approach to determining effect sizes is to use the correlations between variables examining the same general research question.

Since some studies report findings in different ways – t-scores, F, χ^2, and other statistics – besides correlations, we must convert these statistics to r. Table 1 presents formulas for deriving r from various inferential statistics (Mullen and Miller 1994).

Table 1. Formulas for converting statistics to r[5]

Inferential statistic	Formula for converting to r
t	$(t^2/(t^2 + df))^{1/2}$
$F(1,df)$	$(F/(F + df))^{1/2}$
$\chi^2 (1)$	$(\chi^2/N)^{1/2}$
Z	$(Z^2/N)^{1/2}$

We now have methods for handling the majority of studies we will come across. However, before proceeding with the determination of effect sizes, we must address a key question concerning the number of findings to include from each study.

Unit of Analysis. As Durlak and Lipsey (1991) note, a critical issue in meta-analysis is how to handle the "very uneven relationship between individual studies, which constitute the sampling unit for meta-analysis, and the effect sizes, which constitute the data points for analysis" (311). An example may clarify this dilemma as it pertains to our

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[5] Note that the formulas for determining r from t, Z, and χ^2 square the inferential statistic, thus returning only positive values for r. Normally, the descriptive power of correlations depends on where the value falls between -1 and 1, whether the variables move together or apart. With effect sizes, however, the importance lies not in the direction, but in the strength of the effect, therefore, the inferential statistics are squared, and correlations are positive. However, in situations where the inferential statistic is in the unexpected direction, the proper course is to reverse the sign of the inferential statistic, which sometimes results in a negative correlation. Since meta-analysis combines correlations to determine overall effect, there must be come accounting of relationships that do not behave according to hypothesis; therefore, unexpected results take the opposite sign, producing the occasional negative r.

analysis. Overby (1991) investigates constituency influence – as indicated by whether members represent states that had passed a nuclear freeze referendum – on congressional voting. In the study, the effect size of constituency influence is indicated by one variable. In another study of congressional voting, Holian (Holian, et al. 1997) measured constituency influence via numerous public opinion and demographic factors. If we use effect sizes from each of the measures in each study, the second study will contribute more to the overall analysis than the first. A second approach is to use each study as a unit of analysis (Durlak and Lipsey, 1991). In this way, we average the effect size for each dependent measure, thus retrieving one mean effect size per study (note that I am averaging the effect sizes, our common metrics, not the coefficients themselves). This technique is effective for reducing a large number of measurements within a study to a single measurement of effect, and thus will prove effective in analyzing questions of constituency influence. However, the method does present a significant drawback. Because we determine effect sizes the same way for studies with several measures of constituency influence as well as studies with single measures, we may miss some information about the specific nature of the various effects. For that reason I take the first approach; however, I also compare the overall effect indicated with one unit of analysis with that from all units of analysis.

Combining effect sizes and reducing bias

The first part of this step is the heart of the meta-analysis. What do the common metrics reveal about overall effect of the variables? Combining the metrics raises two important considerations. First is the specification of the universe to which an analysis may permit generalization. The choice is between a "fixed-effects model" or a "random-

effects model". The fixed-effects perspective applies when "the universe to which generalizations are made consists of ensembles of studies identical to those in the study sample except for the [particular sampling units] that appear in the studies" (Hedges 1994, 30). The only potential error therefore is in the particular sampling of subjects into the studies. Studies in random-effects models, on the other hand, differ from the universe of studies by the difference in treatment effects as well as the sampling units. The difference comes down to a question of inference: fixed-effects allow inference only on the studies that have been observed in the study sample; random-effects models "would emphasize the generalization to other studies or other situations that could have been studied" (Hedges 1994, 33).

The second consideration in this step involves weighting the data, either before or after it is combined, to correct for possible bias from the differences in the various studies.[6] Meta-analysts traditionally approach this step in one of two ways, either transforming each correlation into a z-score or employing a formula to correct for artifacts in the studies. Specifically, I weight the effect sizes in this meta-analysis by the sample size within each study. Although the formulas for such computations are readily available (Hunter and Schmidt 1990, 1994), I recommend a statistics package to handle these and other data adjustments that may be required in conducting such studies. I employ such a program, one specifically designed to conduct meta-analysis.

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[6] If studies of common phenomena replicated one another perfectly, then simply averaging the observed effects would result in an unbiased estimate or distribution of the population effect. However, studies are rarely perfect replicates of each other. Even studies of the same vote in Congress employ different explanatory variables. And all studies have imperfections within their design or measurements. Some meta-analysts (Hunter and Schmidt 1994) argue that researchers should include within the results of a study the artifacts associated with their research (for instance, measurement error, sampling error, errors in the reliability of the variables, etc.). However, since the studies included in the present meta-analysis only include information on sample size, I correct only for possible sampling error. The z-score transformation

Comprehensive Meta-Analysis™ not only determines uncorrected effects for the entered variables, but also conducts corrections on the data to account for sampling error, with weights determined by the number of observations in each study.

The issue of sample size (here not the number of studies but the number of observations within each study) is important. Lau (Lau et al. 1999) describes a problem in combining the data from 117 findings in 52 studies: "The underlying issue is whether to treat all studies equally" (855). In their analysis, three of the studies had very large sample sizes, leading the authors to wonder if those specific findings could bias their overall results. I earlier discussed some related areas of potential bias. For instance, Lau (Lau et al. 1999) also considered the possibility of bias resulting from published versus unpublished studies or significant versus insignificant findings. Wolf (1986) suggests that meta-analysts must take into consideration whether they will include more than one statistical finding from each study (Lau and his colleagues did). With regard to these latter two challenges – published/unpublished studies and unit of analysis – I accept the possibility of publication bias in an effort to ensure analysis of the most relevant and (editorially) scrutinized research, and I use each finding within the studies.

In sum, I conduct a meta-analysis to determine overall patterns of influence with regard to several explanations of congressional voting. Studies of voting have often focused on the impact of constituency influence, ideology, and/or party identification as key indicators of how members vote. By employing meta-analysis, I am able to statistically combine the outcomes of numerous tests of these variables in order to examine their overall effect. Meta-analysis promises a more rigorous, objective look at

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and Schmidt-Hunter correction both weight effect sizes for sample size; the Schmidt-Hunter method also can be used to correct for numerous other artifacts. Also see Shadish and Haddock (1994).

the literature surrounding this issue. By establishing a common metric for the

measurements from each study, I am able to establish the "effect size" for each outcome,

and combine these findings to determine an overall indication of effect.

FINDINGS

Overall

My literature search and criteria for inclusion led me to 31 studies and over 520 individual indicators of the effect of constituency, party, and ideology on congressional voting.[7] While this certainly represents only a fraction of the total universe of studies of congressional decision-making, I have argued that it is representative of the best research available in this area.

Table 2. Summary of Results – All Studies / All Issue Areas

	Mean effect[a]	# of findings[b]	Total N [c]	Confidence interval (95 %)
Constituency effect		394	108362	
Z-transformation	.13 (.01)*			.11 to .15
Schmidt-Hunter	.13 (.01)*			.12 to .15
Ideology [d]		59	18105	
Z-transformation	.40 (.04)*			.33 to .46
Schmidt-Hunter	.36 (.01)*			.34 to .37
Party identification [e]		66	16722	
Z-transformation	.28 (.04)*			.20 to .35
Schmidt-Hunter	.25 (.01)*			.24 to .27

* $p < .05$

[a] Mean effect refers to Mean *r*, with standard error in parentheses

[b] The number of findings refers to the number of tests of the dependent variable on an independent variable in the studies

[c] The Total N refers to the total number of subjects (congressmen) in the studies, combined

[d] data on ideology comes from studies 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 13, 14, 18, 19, 20, 22, 25, 26, 27, 31

[e] data on party comes from studies 8, 11, 12, 13, 14, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30, 31

Table 2 displays the results of a meta-analysis of the findings of all the studies with regard to the three variables. In other words, it addresses the question: what is the overall effect of constituency influence, ideology, and party for all 31 studies? Within the tables I include the overall mean effect as weighted by the Z-transformation as well as the Schmidt-Hunter weight for sample size. The table also displays the standard error, confidence interval, and range of effect.

One of the first things that stands out in table 2 is the similarity between the results as calculated by the two bias-correction methods. Indeed, most of the literary discussions of these two methods conclude by stating that both methods tend to arrive at similar figures (Shadish and Haddock 1994). Also immediately apparent from the data is the statistical significance of the effect sizes for all three variables across the studies. Of course, given our limited universe of studies, the significance of the effects allows us to claim only that there is some relationship between these variables and congressional decision-making in the studies we examined. I discuss ideology and party first, then turn to a more in-depth investigation of constituency influence.

With regard to the specific variables, ideology shows the strongest relationship, followed by party identification and constituency influence. At least two explanations for ideology's strong showing seem plausible, and both cast some doubt on the actual impact of a member's "view of the world" on voting decisions. First, as mentioned earlier, the studies that measure ideology do so in the same way: interest group ratings based on roll-call voting patterns. While some researchers take steps to "purge" these ratings of any

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[7] Most studies examined more than one vote. Thus, 31 studies included a total of 100 votes on which 407 constituency variables were tested. The number of variables per test ranged from 1 (14 cases) to 11 (2 cases). The mean was 4.1 variables per test, and the median was 3. Thus.

economic or constituency effects, most of the interest group scales in this meta-analysis were "raw", and likely measure economic factors and constituency influence as well as member ideology (Kau and Rubin 1970; Peltzman 1984). Second, the strong showing for ideology may represent either signaling or shirking by the legislator. If signaling, it is means members are able to send low-cost messages to their constituents about likely future voting patterns; if shirking, it is because of slack in the principal-agent relationship that allows the member to vote apart from constituency desires (Kalt and Zupan 1984). This argument, remember, suggests that voters are not likely to monitor narrow, technical issues and votes, thus granting the legislator more leeway to vote his or her personal preference. An interesting application beyond the scope of this study's focus on constituency influence would be to test for differences in effect between studies of broad and specific issues, with ideology expected to impact the narrower issues more (Nelson and Silberberg 1987). In the mean time, given the current state of knowledge with regard to the accurate operationalization and measurement of ideology, such variables will likely continue to relate strongly to congressional voting decisions. Whether this actually represents economic interests or slack in the relationship between voter and legislator remains a source of contention.

Party identification also demonstrates a larger effect overall than constituency. I discussed several reasons why a legislator would follow the lead of the party in voting. Signaling, "posting a bond", and taking "cues" from fellow party members may all lead a member to vote with the party. Again, a further application in the study of party influence would be to investigate the strength of the party-voting relationship on issues

where the parties take strong stands or where the president seeks to influence party members.

Constituency Influence

As with ideology and party identification, Table 2 shows that there is a significant relationship between constituency influence and congressional voting in the studies we analyzed. Though the effect for constituency is not as large as the other two variables, it is statistically significant, and bears closer examination. In light of the earlier discussion of the reasons *to expect* strong constituency influence, why might the variable show a less dramatic effect? A possible reason, which I investigate further below, is that constituency influence is likely to show up on some issues more than on others. Though most argue that a member always keeps at least one eye on the district, it may well be that on low-visibility issues members feel more freedom to vote according to personal reasons. Monitoring is expensive for the electorate, and likely to be invoked only on issues of particular importance to the district or state. Without monitoring, one would expect ideology to count for more in the voting calculus of the representative. When the constituents are aroused and the letters and messages start pouring in, however, the legislator is more likely to follow the wishes of those to whom he owes his position. Because this meta-analysis includes studies on both salient and less-salient issue areas, areas with strong constituency effect may be tempered in the analysis by those with less of an effect.

Another reason, consistent with Peltzman's (1984) arguments concerning ideology, is that constituency indicators measured via economic variables may be diluted by interest group ratings that pick up many of the same measurements. With regard to

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constituency influence as measured in this thesis, an analysis of the outcomes from only the studies that *did not* include a measure of ideology reveals a mean effect of **.15**, while those studies that did include such a measure showed an overall effect of **.11**. Of course, such effect sizes only apply to the studies in our sample, and the standard errors of each make the measurements essentially identical. However, the expected result of including ideological measurements in a model of congressional decision-making is indeed to lessen the reported impact of constituency factors. A larger sample would allow a stronger generalization of such results, and the hypothesis here is that ideology "scales" would indeed lessen the effect of constituency influence when tested together in a large sample of studies.

Additionally, Fenno (1978) argues that a key aspect of a member's "presentational" home style is the explanation given to the district concerning the member's Washington behavior. Specifically, the ability to explain voting decisions to one's constituents is critical to obtaining "voting leeway". Fenno writes, "The familiar "delegate" and "trustee" formulations, we think, should be viewed more as justifications that have explanatory and legitimating usefulness at home, and should be viewed less as formulations describing behavior" (169). So, a member explains his Washington behavior in order to convince his constituents that his votes and decisions are legitimate and *not in need* of their (the constituent's) monitoring. If constituency influence is accurately portrayed as being lower than ideology and party, perhaps it is because Congress has managed to "explain" its way to greater voting leeway.

I argue for a fourth reason, related to Fenno's arguments concerning different constituencies, for the low overall effect size of constituency influence in this analysis.

Unfortunately, as discussed, district-level public opinion is often hard to come by, thus forcing researchers to improvise. This has led to some ingenious attempts at determining actual constituency opinion, but more often than not results in a handful of economic and demographic variables substituting for district opinion. The variables at times perform well and likely often reflect the very factors that create a constituency influence. However, Fenno (1978) argues that congressional members do not look at their district simply in terms of geography or economic factors. Instead, the reelection constituency becomes the focus of the member's efforts to expand and strengthen the part of the district that will vote to return the member to Washington. Therefore, although the variables employed as indicators of constituency influence probably perform as well as expected, they may well measure "too much" of the district, and miss what is truly important to the member's voting calculus. Variables that accurately capture the effect of the reelection constituency – the groups and resources the member of Congress sees as vital to reelection – will likely reflect a stronger effect on congressional voting. In this analysis, Overby and Brown (1997) find a stronger relationship between specific reelection constituency variables and voting than that indicated by the overall mean.

The majority of the studies in this meta-analysis do not focus on reelection constituencies; however, there is another direction available for dissecting constituency influence. The 31 studies in the analysis involve numerous issues and policy areas, allowing some comparison of constituency influence over different types of issues. Table 3 presents this data, again with output corrected for bias

Table 3. Constituency Effect by Issue Area (ordered by size of correlation)

Issue Area	Correct for bias	Mean effect[a]	95 % CI	# of findings[b]	Total N[c]
Civil Rights	Z-trans.	.31 (.06)*	.20 to .40		
	S / H	.40 (.02) *	.36 to .43	17	2136
Foreign Affairs	Z-trans.	.31 (.06)*	.20 to .41		
	S / H	.26 (.02)*	.22 to .29	10	2683
Budget	Z-trans.	.24 (.05)*	.15 to .33		
	S / H	.22 (.01)*	.19 to .24	19	7179
Social Welfare	Z-trans.	.21 (.04)*	.13 to .27		
	S / H	.16 (.01)*	.13 to .18	23	6304
Supreme Court	Z-trans.	.15 (.04)*	.07 to .22		
	S / H	.15 (.03)*	.09 to .21	12	1191
Mean Constituency Influence	*Z-trans.*	*.13 (.01)**	*.11 to .15*		
	S / H	*.13 (.01)**	*.12 to .15*	*394*	*108362*
Agriculture	Z-trans.	.13 (.05)*	.03 to .23		
	S / H	.13 (.02)*	.09 to .18	6	1776
Finance	Z-trans.	.13 (.03)*	.08 to .19		
	S / H	.13 (.01)*	.11 to .15	18	7476
Women's' Rights	Z-trans.	.12 (.02)*	.07 to .16		
	S / H	.11 (.02)*	.08 to .14	14	4436
Trade	Z-trans.	.12 (.01)*	.10 to .15		
	S / H	.10 (.01)*	.09 to .12	82	14877
Environment	Z-trans.	.10 (.02)*	.07 to .13		
	S / H	.08 (.01)*	.06 to .10	39	11839
Defense	Z-trans.	.08 (.01)*	.06 to .10		
	S / H	.08 (.01)*	.06 to .09	90	24830
Energy	Z-trans.	.08 (.01)*	.06 to .10		
	S / H	.08 (.01)*	.06 to .10	24	9631
Labor	Z-trans.	.08 (.02)*	.04 to .11		
	S / H	.07 (.01)*	.04 to .10	15	4956

* p < .05

[a] Mean effect refers to Mean *r*, with standard error in parentheses

[b] The number of findings refers to the number of tests of the dependent variable on an independent variable in the studies

[c] The Total N refers to the total number of subjects (congressmen) in the studies, combined

The effect sizes are all significant, leading us to believe that, for the studies we examined,

there is a relationship between constituency and congressional voting in these specific

areas. Obviously, from Table 3, we see that members of Congress apparently do feel the effects of their districts and constituencies on some issues more than on others.[8]

Particularly low scores seem to reflect a lack of influence on environmental (.10), energy (.08), and labor issues (.08). These low effect sizes actually provide a perfect opportunity to witness the positive and negative attributes of the meta-analysis. First of all, the sample for both environmental and energy issues involves several studies and numerous roll call votes. One could argue convincingly that the saliency of energy issues especially tends to cycle, thus invoking powerful constituency response on some occasions, and indifference at other times. Arnold (1990) argues in particular for the saliency of energy policy in the 1970s. Congressional members focused heavily on countering fuel shortages and high energy prices that were impacting their constituents and thus their job security. Others argue theoretically that environmental policy, with large and powerful citizens' organizations, is an arena especially ripe for influence from this active part of the constituency; empirical evidence generally does not confirm this, however. However, because both issues often affect specific districts, and because at least one tends to cycle in and out of salience, one would expect votes in these areas to be marked by logrolling – as members unaffected by the legislation support their affected colleagues in anticipation of future benefits – and shirking, because of the low visibility

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[8] Table 3 also demonstrates, as expected, that analyses involving a larger number of findings (the number of tests of the dependent variable [voting] on an independent variable in the studies) tend on average towards lower mean effects. Those issue areas demonstrating *larger* effects than the overall constituency influence effect have an average of 16.2 findings per area. Those areas showing *smaller* effects than the overall mean have an average of 36 findings per area. Defense (90), Trade (82), and Environment (39) are the issue areas with the most interactions between the dependent and independent variables, and these areas also show smaller-than-average effect sizes. On the other hand, remove the two largest issue areas (by number of findings) and the number of findings per study is almost identical between those areas above (16.2) and below (19.3) the overall mean effect. The bottom line is, as mentioned earlier, the larger the sample of studies, the more accurate and generalizable the meta-analysis. An extension of this research would include more studies from each issue area.

of the issue to most districts. Thus, our meta-analysis generates results – lower effect size – that seem reasonable. The sample for the labor issues, however, included only two roll-call votes, in two different eras. Therefore, this low mean effect size, in an issue area where one would expect constituency to play a stronger role, may reflect the quality and sample of studies more than the actual relationship.

The stronger measures of effect size in Table 3 may be demonstrating the same phenomenon, in reverse. The effect sizes for budget issues (.24) and civil rights (.40) are among the largest in the study. Certainly, this seems plausible and expected. Civil rights was one of the areas in which Miller and Stokes (1963) found significant constituency influence, and budget issues can involve both high visibility tax items as well as opportunities for legislators to secure benefits for their districts. Foreign affairs (.31) also displays a strong effect size in Table 3, and Miller and Stokes found evidence for influence in this area as well, although there is evidence to indicate foreign issues do not often resonate with voters. However, all three of these issue areas involve fairly small sample sizes, and the civil rights issue especially seems driven by a particularly strong outlier (Pritchard 1986). Thus, while our strong results in these areas might not surprise intuitively (with the possible exception of foreign affairs), the small samples caution against overstating the conclusions.

The studies of social welfare, however, represent various policies and numerous roll-call votes. Social welfare is a policy area in which one would expect to see greater constituency influence, although certainly party and ideology could play a strong role as well. Indicators such as unemployment in the district, per capita income, and district opinion are likely strong influences on a legislator's vote choice in this area. And, with

regard to the meta-analysis, the strong indicator of effect for this issue (.21) seems to reflect a more reliable sample of studies. Thus, while the larger effect sizes in these areas are unsurprising, meta-analytically the results for social welfare probably mean more than the other three. With both weak and strong effect sizes, the meta-analysis confirms some intuition, but also demonstrates some areas of caution in research synthesis.

The two issue areas of trade and Supreme Court nominations produce somewhat surprising results. The effect sizes for both issues are significant, again pointing to some relationship between constituency influence and congressional voting. However, impact for these two high-profile areas seems to be about that of the overall mean (trade = .12; Supreme Court nominations = .15). Earlier discussion pointed to the arguments of many scholars that members of Congress are especially likely to listen to their constituents on visible issues, since future election opponents will certainly be quick to raise questionable decisions by the incumbent (Fiorina 1974, Fenno 1978, Kingdon 1989). However, on issues such as the nomination battle of Clarence Thomas and the ratification votes for the GATT and NAFTA, our sample of studies does not reflect a stronger-than-average constituency effect.

One weak effect size that is very surprising is defense. According to the meta-analysis, on a variety of defense spending issues, weapon development proposals, and nuclear weapons policies, constituency indicators such as Department of Defense spending in a district, estimated economic benefit, and presidential support do not seem to matter much at all (mean effect size = .08). In fact, one study (Fleisher 1985) is an outlier in the direction of stronger effect, meaning that the actual effect size from our sample is probably lower than that shown in Table 3. And, consider that the majority of

significant effect sizes within the sample are driven by district-level support for President Reagan. Economic benefits from military spending in a district do not seem to be a significant indicator of how a congressman from such a district might vote. Individual studies of defense policy support such a conclusion, arguing that ideology (Fleisher 1985; Bernstein and Anthony 1974), publicly held views on defense policy (Lindsay 1990), and party membership (Abdolali and Ward 1998) are better predictors of voting than are economic benefits. I argue that an important variable that was not included in any of the sampled studies on defense policy is military representativeness in the reelection constituency. But this simply highlights the difficulty in determining adequate variables to represent a fairly abstract concept in constituency influence.

Finally, a comparison that hints theoretically at a difference in the level of constituency influence is not borne out in this analysis. An argument could be made that, with a more concentrated and specialized constituency and the burden of frequent elections, representatives would be more concerned with satisfying constituents than would senators. Alternatively, senators from homogenous states could be expected to weigh constituency influence as heavily as would representatives from heterogeneous districts. In our 31 studies of congressional decision making, constituency influence as a variable affecting voting in the House (mean effect = .12; number of findings = 254) and the Senate (mean effect = .15; number of findings = 195) proves significant and of similar strength in both chambers

CONCLUSION

This thesis has examined overall patterns of constituency influence in studies of congressional decision-making. In order to review the state of research on this topic, I conducted a meta-analysis focused on constituency influence of roll-call voting. I established clear criterion for inclusion and coded studies in order to determine a measure of effect for each interaction of the dependent and independent variables. The meta-analysis indicated that constituency influence is a significant indicator of congressional voting, but that ideology and party identification play a more prominent role. This finding could mean members are voting their preferences due to non-salient issues, slack in the principal-agent relationship, or satisfactory "explanations" by the member. Alternatively, rough measurements of ideology via interest groups scores may capture important elements of constituency influence through economic variables "hidden" within the voting scores.

Naturally, an exciting extension of this research would involve expanding the sample of studies. Though the results of analyzing more of the known universe of research may not differ significantly from those presented here, the ability to generalize would be greatly enhanced. Additionally, the nature of meta-analysis would enable us to "break down" the larger sample in at least two fruitful ways. One, a clearer picture would emerge of constituency influence within specific issue areas. Second, and perhaps most valuable for continued research in this area, a careful analysis of such a large

sample would go a long way in informing the academic community of the reliability and

accuracy of the various measurements of constituency influence.

APPENDIX

TABLES

TABLE A-1. Description of Studies Included in the Meta-Analysis

Study	Dependent Variable	Independent Variables	Results
1. Bailey and Brady, 1998	Yes vote – Senate vote on the NAFTA	Measures of imports and exports; percent union membership; employment in non-tradable items	r = .22 on NAFTA r = .19 on GATT
2. Barrett and Cook, 1991	Vote on behalf of social welfare – based on Representatives' ratings from Children's Defense Network (10 votes) and National Council of Senior Citizens (10 votes)	Median family income; percent unemployed; district support for Reagan in 1984	r = .45
3. Bartels, 1991	Votes on behalf of defense spending - Sequence of votes on amendment, appropriations bill, and conference report in FY 1982 defense bill	District opinion; federal tax payments in district; Defense spending in district; district support for Reagan	r = .17
4. Caldeira and Wright, 1998	Senate vote on behalf of Supreme Court nomination of Robert Bork Senate vote on behalf of Justice Souter Senate vote on behalf of Justice Thomas	Estimate derived from national polls + proportions of blacks, Democrats, Republicans, liberals, conservatives, rural dwellers in districts	r = .02
5. Chappell, 1993	House vote to ease certain requirements for reporting distribution of mortgage loans	Median income; per capita oil production; urban population	r = .03 r = .02 r = .11

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Study	Vote description	Constituency measure	r
	House vote to delete certain provisions of Clean Air Act		
	House vote to aid oil exploration		
6. Clark, 1996	House vote for pay increase – three separate votes	Median income; electoral security	$r = .15$ $r = .12$ $r = .18$
7. Davis, 1993	Vote (House) for airline industry on 3 different votes	Dummy variables indicating district opinion *in support of, in opposition to, or divided on* industry in question	$r = .01$ $r = .03$
	Vote (House) for rail industry on 3 different votes		
8. Davis and Porter, 1989	Index of how senator voted on 21 bills leading up to and including Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act (higher = more votes cast for control of strip-mining)	Several indicators of impact of mining (both surface and underground) industry in district; coal industry impact	$r = .17$
9. Erickson, 1979	Guttman scale scores for the 86th Congress	Index of constituency opinion on social welfare, civil rights, and foreign affairs (based on combination of constituency characteristics)	$r = .49$ $r = .34$ $r = .29$
10. Fleisher, 1985	Senate votes for the B-1 program over five votes	Level of economic benefit to state	$r = .41$ $r = .16$ $r = .18$ $r = .15$ $r = .02$
11. Fowler and Shaiko, 1987	Yes votes by Senators on 5 separate environmental bills	Measure of preferences of members of environmental group; mean preferences of environmental constituency;	$r = .09$ $r = .12$ $r = .12$ $r = .12$

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Study	Vote/Measure	Variables	r
		state characteristics relevant to each bill	$r = .18$
12. Hero and Tolbert, 1995	Southwest Voter Research Institute scores – voting in support of Hispanic issues (House)	Percent Hispanic, percent black, percent urban, per capita income	$r = .13$
13. Hird, 1993	Votes to expand Superfund – House	Number of sites on priority cleanup list; chemical firms; petroleum firms; hazardous waste sites in state; percent membership in environmentalist groups	$r = .06$
	Votes to expand Superfund – Senate		$r = .08$
14. Holian, Krebs, and Walsh, 1997	House vote to ratify NAFTA	Perot's district vote; Clinton's district vote; median income; percent black residents; percent manufacturing jobs; regional variables	$r = .06$
15. Hutchings, 1998	Southern Democrats votes on GOP amendment to Civil Rights Act (in opposition); votes on Civil Rights Act (in support); LCCR score (in support)	Percent black; percent urban; support for incumbent (1988 vote); white political attitudes (Dukakis vote)	$r = .12$ $r = .24$ $r = .21$
16. Jackson and King, 1989	Vote in support of motion on H Res 1306 (opposing redistributive tax policy)	Percent in district with income above \$25K; public opinion on redistributive policies; economic growth in district; lame duck representative; education level in district	$r = .13$
	Vote in support of amendment to index capital gains taxes for inflation		$r = .08$
	Vote against Corman amendment (opposing		$r = .18$

Study	Measure	Variables	r
17. Kau and Rubin, 1993	progressive tax policy) House vote supporting President Reagan's position on several diverse issues	Various demographic variables: per capita income; percent union; percent black; percent Hispanic; percent living in central city	$r = .07$ $r = .08$ $r = .09$ $r = .13$ $r = .08$ $r = .04$ $r = .08$ $r = .08$ $r = .13$ $r = .05$
18. Leogrande and Brenner, 1993	Index of support for contra aid; 0 – 1.0 = proportion of votes against aid	Region; district vote for Reagan in 1984	$r = .09$
19. Lindsay, 1990	*Weapon Support Score* – based on Senators' votes in support of strategic weapons		$r = .09$
20. Lindsay, 1991	House vote for *higher* spending on Strategic Defense Initiative	SDI spending in district; district support for Reagan in 1984	$r = .16$ $r = .04$ $r = .14$ $r = .07$ $r = .15$ $r = .08$ $r = .09$ $r = .12$ $r = .06$ $r = .09$ $r = .06$ $r = .06$ $r = .12$ $r = .10$ $r = .12$
21. Marks, 1993	Votes for more protectionist policies (5 amendments to omnibus foreign trade bills in House / Senate in 1987)	District percentages in various industrial/manufacturing sectors; also employment in exportables; farm; union percentage	$r = .05$ $r = .16$ $r = .18$ $r = .12$ $r = .08$
22. McCormick, 1985	Votes against 1982 nuke freeze proposals Votes against 1983 nuke freeze proposals	Regional identification (Northeast, Border, Midwest, South, West)	$r = .02$ $r = -.03$ $r = .03$ $r = .02$ $r = .02$ $r = .05$

Study	Dependent variable	Independent variable	r	r
23. McDonagh, 1992	House votes in favor of liberal Progressive Era legislation: Clayton Act; Women's Suffrage; Prohibition	Measure of district opinion; district economy	$r = .17$ $r = .2$ $r = .2$	
24. McDonagh, 1993	House votes (1 = yes) on liberal Progressive Era legislation: Clayton Act; Women's Suffrage; Prohibition	Percent urban; percent foreign-born white; average value of farms; district opinion	$r = .14$ $r = .14$ $r = .18$	
25. Overby, 1991	House vote against Broomfield amendment (anti-nuke-freeze); House vote for Solarz amendment (pro-nuke-freeze); House vote against Hyde amendment (anti-nuke-freeze)	Dummy variable designating if state passed a nuclear freeze referendum	$r = .15$ $r = -.02$ $r = -.02$	
26. Overby and Brown, 1997	Yes vote – Senate – for confirmation of Thomas	Black proportion of reelection constituency; interaction: black percentage and facing reelection	$r = .24$	
27. Overby and Henschen, 1994	Log likelihood of Senate confirmation vote for Thomas	Constituency ideology; number of women executives in district; number of blacks in district	$r = .22$	
28. Pritchard, 1986	Support for the president (Nixon and Johnson) in several policy areas	District presidential vote for Democratic candidate; constituency index consisting of region, percent white-collar, percent metro	$r = .20$ $r = .41$ $r = .51$ $r = .4$	$r = .18$ $r = .33$ $r = .56$ $r = .32$
29. Shapiro, Brady, Brody, and Ferejohn, 1990	Senator liberalism voting scores (National Journal) for economic and foreign policy issues	Mean policy position of party constituents, independents, and opposition	$r = .33$ $r = .39$	

30. Tosini and Tower, 1987	Senate vote FOR protectionist amendment to Textile Bill	Percent union in district; percent employed in textiles; percent employed in exports; percent unemployed; facing reelection	$r = .15$
	House vote FOR protectionist Textile Bill		$r = .18$
31. West, 1987	Vote for President's 1981 tax plan	Numerous demographic variables; public opinion on tax/spending cuts	$r = .14$

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Joseph Foster is a h? ?oar d, father, and Captain in the United States Air Force. He was born in Los Alamos, New Mexico, and completed his undergraduate work in Political Science at the University of New Mexico, graduating in 1991. He completed Air Force Officer Training School in January 1994, and served as an Aircraft Maintenance Officer at Grand Forks Air Force Base, North Dakota, and Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida. In October 1998 he was selected to teach at the United States Air Force Academy and was assigned to Florida State University in August 1999. He began instructing in the Political Science Department at the Air Force Academy in January 2001. Joseph is married to the former Shelli McCaslin and has two sons, Luke and Brennan.